

STATINTL

Dodd's Lateness Saved 2 U.N. Men

CPYRGHT

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Two United Nations officials beaten up last month by Katangan soldiers may well owe their lives to the fact that United States Senator Thomas Dodd and his wife were 20 minutes late arriving at the party from which the men were dragged.

Mrs. Dodd, a diminutive, gray-haired mother of six, told about that frantic night in the Congo's war-racked Elisabethville in an interview yesterday.

Katangan soldiers were just about to drive off with the beaten and battered U. N. officials when the Dodd car arrived late, at the private home where a dinner was to be given honoring the Connecticut Democrat.

"We had had a lovely day," Mrs. Dodd recalled. "There had been a reception for us earlier at the home of American Consul Lewis Hoffacker."

Met Tshombe
met Katangan President Tshombe — whom I thought very impressive — and I remember being struck by how well everyone got along together. Katangans, Belgians, U. N. representatives and people from our country."

It was only because the Dodds stopped off at their own quarters between the reception and the dinner to "freshen up" that they were late for the dinner, thus arriving when they were most needed.

"We saw a crowd gathered. We thought there had been an accident. Then we saw Ivan Smith, head of the U. N. in Katanga, with blood streaming down his face. We had just met him the day before in Leopoldville, and just left him a while earlier at the Consul's reception. We could scarcely believe it."

Cry for Help

A moment later she spotted Brian Urquhart, another U. N. official, "in the midst of a group of Katangan soldiers who were pushing and pulling him. His face was covered with blood. He was crying, 'Help me, someone help me!'"

Like everyone else connected with the ugly incident, Mrs. Dodd was full of praise for Consul Hoffacker's quick and decisive action on behalf of the two men.

"It was the bravest thing I ever saw," she said. "He jumped out of the car (in which he had just arrived with the Dodds) and waded with bayonets, and pulled Smith out."

When Mr. Smith and Mr.



MRS. DODD

—Star Staff Photo

Hoffacker ran back to the car, they piled into the front seat with the driver and two other men, making the space decidedly crowded.

Mrs. Dodd says she and Mrs. Hoffacker dragged one of the five, David Martin of Senator Dodd's staff — into the back seat, each grasping one of his arms, as the car zoomed off.

Mr. Hoffacker shouted to his wife and Mrs. Dodd to crouch on the floor, which they did, because "We thought the soldiers would start shooting — but they didn't," Mrs. Dodd recalled.

Demanded Other's Rescue

The group drove directly to Mr. Tshombe's house, where Mr. Hoffacker demanded help in rescuing the other U. N. official, Mr. Urquhart. Eventually, he was rescued, and the whole group went next door to Mr. Hoffacker's, where they ate sandwiches and talked until 2 a.m.

"While we were in the Consul's house having sandwiches, a Ghurka colonel with a handlebar moustache came tearing in, wearing a camouflage helmet, with four hand grenades hanging around his waist.

"He said he was going to attack Tshombe's residence with the grenades, to force the release of Mr. Urquhart.

"Everyone told him to calm down, that he'd only make matters worse. He reluctantly agreed to wait another 45 minutes."

Fortunately, before the representatives had finished the release of Mr. Urquhart, she said.